

The backyard bird feeder is a very busy place especially in spring with incoming bird migrations from Southern regions. Sparrows crowd and mob it beyond capacity. They jostle, bully, fight, squabble and more for a prime spot or just a spot at the feeding tray; expending so much energy just for a few bites before being unseated by rivals. Humans are like that; children practice for adulthood by playing games such as King of the Mountain on dirt piles and such. Later as adults, they compete in similar 'bird eat bird' fashion for a business percentage, promotion, mate, wealth accumulation, etc. Today I noticed a sparrow lying on the ground in proximity to the feeding mob. It lay alone, struggling, dying. Only one fellow mob member paused for a moment to visit and investigate before returning among the fighting hordes. However cruel this seems, nature is merciful. A resident feral cat passing by noticed the dying bird and came to investigate. They hang around the feeder hoping for an easy meal opportunity in catching an inattentive, slow bird. Today was a very lucky day for the hungry cat. The mob disbursed to nearby treetops at the cat's approach. It seized the dying bird, dispatched and ate it leaving only a few feathers behind as evidence of any struggle then wandered away. Later when the coast was clear, bird mobs returned to business as usual at the feeder. None noticed the missing member; life went on as if nothing happened at all. People are like that, too; all their dramas, crisis, competition, and such for a piece of the action and percentage of mammon originating from and returning to dust. All life is a perpetual circle. Nature's universe creates all forms here from earth. Nature scoops up a handful of dirt, creates a human, cow, cat, bird, ad infinitum leaving a hole for the form's eventual return, which refills the vacant hole, proper. Few notice this until all alone facing dying and death. Consequently, the next time life seems an insurmountable crisis, remember it all comes down the same for us all; whether buried as pauper or with motorcade, lying in a decorated box, covered in flowers, riding in the back of a black limousine, our hole awaits return of the dust from which it came. A good question to ask when facing any 'life and death crisis:' is this the anthill I wish to die on today? Does 'whatever' I am fretting about really matter at all?